AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for providing security in a computer system, comprising:

selecting a set of properties for use in determining ~~members of a clean group~~ if an item is clean; [[and]]

evaluating an item to determine if it has the specified set of properties; [[, and]]

sending an add request to a clean group server; and

if the clean group server determines that the item ~~does have~~ has the specified set of properties, the clean group server designating [[it]] the item as a member of [[the]] a clean group.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the items are computers.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein when a computer is to be evaluated, a clean component is installed on the computer to perform compliance checks.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein a compliance check is performed at a selected time for an item to determine if the item has the specified set of properties.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein one of the specified set of properties is whether all of the available updates have been installed.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the updates comprise at least one of security updates or service packs.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein if the compliance check fails, a message is sent to indicate that the object should not be in the clean group.

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8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein if the compliance check fails, the clean group membership of the item is invalidated.

9. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 8, wherein the invalidation of the clean group membership comprises local actions ~~which may include~~ including at least ~~one of~~ hiding ~~or erasing~~ the domain credentials of the item.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 7, wherein if the compliance check fails, additional steps [[may be]] are taken including at least ~~one of~~ hiding cryptographic keys ~~or logging out a privileged user~~.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein if a compliance check passes, a message is sent to provide information that will be evaluated to determine if the item should be in the clean group.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 11, wherein after a message is received and a determination is made that the item should be in the clean group, a countdown is started and if another message is not received by the end of the countdown, the item is removed from the clean group.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein an item in the clean group performs a self check to determine if it still has the specified set of properties, and if it does not, takes action to have itself removed from the clean group.

14. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~further comprising a clean group server,~~ wherein the clean group server ~~initiating~~ initiates a status check to determine if the members in the clean group still have the specified properties.

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15. (Currently amended) A system for managing security, comprising:

a clean group server;

an update component which includes updates for items;

a clean runtime component, the clean runtime component being installed on an item and being able to communicate with the update component[[,]] and the clean group server;

the clean runtime component sending an add request to the clean group server; and

~~the item becoming a member of~~ if the clean group server determines that the item has a specified set of properties, the clean group server designates the item as a member of a clean group ~~when selected criteria are met; and~~

~~a clean group server~~.

16. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 15, further comprising a domain controller ~~which communicates with the clean group server~~ with which the clean group server communicates to designate the item as a member of the clean group.

17. (Original) The system of Claim 15, wherein the items comprise computers.

18. (Original) The system of Claim 17, wherein compliance checks are performed for the items to determine if the items meet the selected criteria.

19. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein one of the criteria is whether selected available updates have been installed.

20. (Original) The system of Claim 19, wherein the updates comprise at least one of security updates or service packs.

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21. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein if a compliance check fails, a message is sent from the clean runtime component to the clean group server to indicate that the item should not be in the clean group.

22. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein if the compliance check passes, a message is sent from the clean runtime component to the clean group server to provide information that will be used to evaluate whether the item should be in the clean group.

23. (Original) The system of Claim 22, wherein after a message is received to indicate that the item should be placed in the clean group, a countdown is started and if another message is not received by the end of the countdown, the item is removed from the clean group.

24. (Original) The system of Claim 15, wherein the clean runtime component performs a self-check of the item to determine if it meets the selected criteria for remaining in the clean group.

25. (Original) The system of Claim 15, wherein the clean group server initiates a compliance check for items to determine if they should remain in the clean group.

26. (Currently amended) One or more computer-readable media having computer-executable components for providing security in a computer system, the computer-executable components comprising:

a runtime object ~~which is installed~~ for installation on a computer, ~~the runtime object being run on the computer to determine~~ wherein the runtime object, when executed, determines if the computer ~~is in compliance~~ has a specified set of properties, and ~~based on the results of the compliance check sends a message regarding whether the computer should be in a group~~ sends an add request to a clean group server; and

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instructions for installation on a clean group server for processing the add request, wherein the instructions, when executed, cause the clean group server to designate the computer as a member of a clean group, if the clean group server determines that the add request is valid.

27. (Original) The media of Claim 26, wherein the compliance check is performed initially upon installation of the runtime object.

28. (Original) The media of Claim 26, wherein the compliance check comprises a determination of whether selected available updates have been installed on the computer.

29. (Original) The media of Claim 28, wherein the selected available updates comprise at least one of security updates or service packs.

30. (Currently amended) The media of Claim 26, wherein after ~~a message~~ the add request is received ~~to indicate that the computer should be placed in the group~~ by the clean group server, a countdown is started and if another message is not received by the end of the countdown, the ~~item~~ computer is removed ~~from~~ as a member of the group.

31. (Currently amended) The media of Claim 26, wherein the clean runtime object ~~performs~~ initiates a compliance check on the computer.

32. (Currently amended) The media of Claim 26, wherein [[a]] the clean group server communicates with the runtime object to initiate a compliance check.

33. (Currently amended) A method for providing security in a computer system, comprising:

~~determining if a computer is in compliance; and~~ selecting a set of properties for use in determining if a computer is clean;

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evaluating a computer to determine if it has the specified set of properties;

sending an add request to a clean group server; and

based on whether or not the clean group server determines that the computer is in compliance, the clean group server disabling or enabling the computer domain account.

34. (Original) The method of Claim 33, wherein when a new computer is to be added to the domain account, the new computer's account is placed in a disabled state until the computer is proved to be in compliance.

35. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 33, wherein when a new computer is to be added to the domain account, the domain join operation is predicated on proving that the computer is in compliance by requiring [[a]] the clean group server to participate in the domain join operations.

36. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 33, wherein ~~the compliance check~~ evaluating a computer comprises determining whether available updates have been installed on the computer.

37. (Original) The method of Claim 33, wherein the computer periodically performs compliance checks.

38. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 33, wherein [[a]] the clean group server periodically initiates a compliance check on the computer.

39. (Currently amended) A method for providing security in a computer system, comprising:

performing compliance checks for items;

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placing items which pass the compliance check into a clean group; and

removing items from the clean group which fail the compliance check;

wherein items within the clean group can access a collection of IPSec communication requirements and parameters that allow them to communicate with other items within the clean group; and

items not within the clean group cannot access the collection of IPSec communication requirements and parameters, and are thereby quarantined from receiving information from or sending information to items within the clean group.

40. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein after an item passes a compliance check and is placed in the clean group, a countdown is started and if another compliance check is not passed by the end of the countdown, the item is removed from the clean group.

41. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein the item is a computer.

42. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein the item performs a compliance check.

43. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein a clean group server initiates a compliance check on the item.

44. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein the compliance check is performed by the item communicating with an update Web site to determine if updates are available for the item.

45. (Original) The method of Claim 44, wherein the item communicates with a clean group server to establish its membership in the clean group.

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46. (Original) The method of Claim 45, wherein the clean group server communicates with a domain controller.

47. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 39, wherein a compliance check [[may be]] is initiated by one or more of a client coming online, changes in client status/configuration, changes in network status/configuration, or changes to a compliance policy.

48. (Original) The method of Claim 39, wherein a clean group server communicates to non-compliant items how to get back into compliance.

49. (Original) The method of Claim 48, wherein the non-compliant items are directed to a Web site with online instructions to the user, and once the instructions are followed, another server-assisted compliance check is initiated.

50. (Original) The method of Claim 48, wherein the non-compliant items are instructed how to get into the compliant state automatically without requiring a user's involvement.

51. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 39, wherein an item [[may be]] is a user, and a user's clean group membership is evaluated on the basis of whether the user's computer is in compliance.

52. (Canceled)

53. (Currently amended) The method of Claim [[52]] 39, wherein items within the clean group ~~is utilized to provide enforcement of the computer security policy~~ are given access to the collection of IPSec settings by binding active directory group policy to the clean group membership such that only members of the clean group can read the policy.

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54-55. (Canceled)

56. (Currently amended) The method of Claim [[55]] 39, wherein a client that changes state from membership in the clean group to non-membership is required to clear all policy settings distributed via the clean group.

57-59. (Canceled)

60. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein if the clean group server determines that the item does not have the specified set of properties, the clean group server designating the item as a member of a dirty group.

61. (New) The system of Claim 15, wherein if the clean group server determines that the item does not have the specified set of properties, the clean group server designating the item as a member of a dirty group.

62. (New) The method of Claim 8, wherein the invalidation of the clean group membership comprises local actions including at least erasing the domain credentials of the item.

63. (New) The method of Claim 7, wherein if the compliance check fails, additional steps are taken including at least logging out a privileged user.

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